LA MER

Cover graphic: "La Mer," by Mary Roberts.

NEW MEMBERSHIP RATES

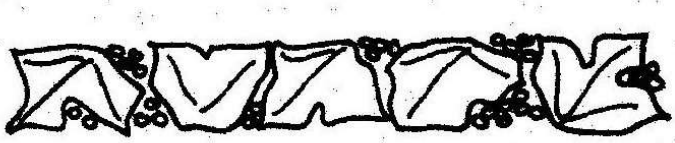
The BiCenter has raised its rates:

Unemployed	$12
Regular	$20
Sustaining	$50

Newsletter subscription only $6 (no membership).

People who are interested in attending special workshops and social events at the BiCenter should be aware that there is a definite advantage to becoming a member of the Center, despite the higher rates which take effect upon publication of this newsletter. Some events are open to members only, and the cost to non-members for other events is substantially higher than to members.

We encourage you to contribute to our organization. The BiCenter is not a social club but is a community service organization, and your membership is our main means of support. We encourage you to contribute more than the regular $20 membership to support our activities. Remember, with the new rise of rightwing, sex-negative, anti-choice forces, the BiCenter needs your support!!!



THE BISEXUAL CENTER

P.O. Box 26227
San Francisco, CA 94126
(415) 929-9299

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Neil Fullagar, Jim Haws, Bobbie Jeanne Kennedy, Arlene Krantz, David Lourea, Lee Olivier, Mary Roberts.

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membership

Regular	$20.00
Unemployed	$12.00
Sustaining	$50.00
Newsletter Only	$ 6.00

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Some Thoughts on BISEXUALITY by James Ramey

When I am asked about my sexual orientation--heterosexual, homosexual, or (God forbid!) bisexual--I am inclined to reply "Why can't you simply accept me as sexual?" I relate to what goes on between a person's ears, not to what is between that person's legs. Nevertheless, just as I become a Jew when Jewishness is being challenged, I am inclined to become gay or straight or bi when that is the issue. There are times when we must stand up and be counted if we are to live with ourselves.

Bisexuality, as epitomized by the Bisexual Center, probably means freedom to choose rather than a sexual preference. It is a political statement in an era in which both gays and straights seek to polarize the issue: you must be either one of us or one of them. This is in the good old American tradition of viewing the world in value-judgment terms: everything is either black or white, good or bad, right or wrong. It is the simplistic attempt to reduce all issues to yes-or-no terms that has kept us from dealing realistically with complex issues in general. People do not want to face the reality that there are many possible right and wrong answers to any problem and that the decision process can be described as examining the various "right" answers in terms of evaluating the tradeoffs and payoffs associated with these tradeoffs.

An examination of bisexuality in these terms reveals the interesting fact that bisexuality can be seen as situational--as a process function rather than a condition of being. Person-situation interaction is generally ignored in discussions of sexual response, although we all recognize that opportunity, ability to relate, and peer expectations are significant factors in the formation of any relationship. Looking at individual lifelines, we should not be surprised to find that situational specifics, attitudes with respect to a particular behavior, beliefs about the consequences of behavior, and the actual consequences of such behavior determine to a large degree whether that behavior will in fact occur.

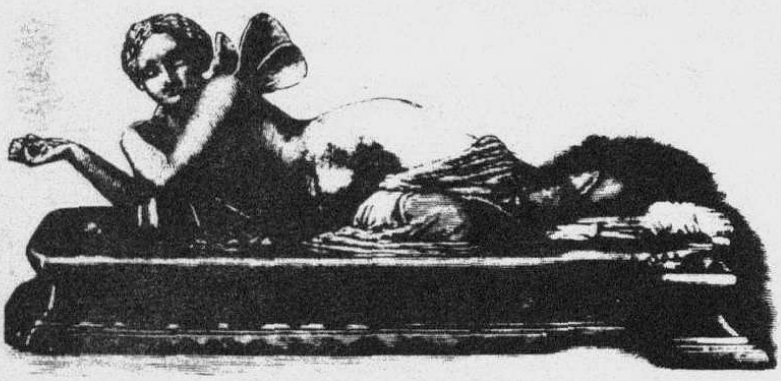
Some people appear more willing than others to expand their sexual boundaries beyond the usual acceptance or rejection of cross-sex relating. This obviously doubles their relationship potential. It also, as I have already suggested, singles them out for odd-ball treatment by both gays and straights. Why are they willing to put up with this treatment? So far as I have been able to tell, it would appear that there are at least two possible reasons. Some bisexuals seem to be uncommonly "together" people. They have strong self-concepts, they know their own minds, they are at ease with their lifestyle. There are others who espouse bisexuality who definitely do not "have it all together." Such a person appears to be whipped from pillar to post, is self-tormented, unsure of self, and generally in a turmoil. I would suggest that this is not necessarily a phase to be worked through on the way to becoming the first type. Rather, the "cool" ones seem often to have been cool first, and to have adopted bisexuality as a modus operandi as a result.

This leads me to speculate on whether or not we should even regard bisexuality as an issue. Personally, I feel relatively certain that everyone is born bisexual, and that person-situation interaction subsequently conditions us toward a particular sexual orientation. It is interesting to note that "bisexual" is a non-explicit term in the first place--what we have been talking about is actually "ambisexual"---"bisexual is not

(cont'd on page 4)

(SOME THOUGHTS ON BISEXUALITY,
cont'd from page 3)

properly descriptive. It is, once again, a politically-imposed word, a case of therapist labeling. Perhaps if we concentrated on how we relate sexually rather than on the sex of the person to whom we relate we would spend our time more profitably. Arguments about whether there really is such a thing as bisexuality, and about the implications of relating to both males and females are a little like the old arguments about how many angels can stand on the head of a pin--interesting, but inconsequential. Wouldn't it be nice if we could dispense with such arguments, and get on with the fun of relating?



WOMEN'S DROP-IN RAP GROUP

There are many subjects women have needed and wanted to discuss with other women, and because of this we are now starting a Women's Drop-In Rap Group. The group will be held on the first and third Monday of every month, 7:30-9:30 PM at the Center. Arlene and Jean will lead the group alternately. We'll ask for a $3 donation. First night - May 18th.

JUST A MAN

By Gregory D'Amante

I don't understand,
That I'm a man,
In love with a man,
I don't understand.

I've got to understand,
That I'm just a man,
An ordinary man,
In love with a man,
I don't understand,
I've got to think it over.

There is this woman in my life
That I love so much
And it breaks my heart
'Cause I love a man
I don't understand
Why I feel this way.

I don't understand,
That I'm just a man,
That's in love with two,
How could this be true,
That I'm in love with both,
A man and a woman.

I now understand,
I can love a man,
I can love a woman,
I'll give them both a try.
Good night.

CLOSED MENS' GROUP FORMING

Starting in June the BiCenter will offer a six-week, on-going support group for men. The focus of the group will be to take a look at mens' issues; our sexuality, body imagery, sex role stereotyping and ways of developing caring, supportive and nurturing relationships with other men. We will use a multimedia approach including films, slides, tapes, and small and large group processes. The group will be facilitated by David Lourea who has a Doctorate of Arts in Human Sexuality. Men who are interested must be willing to commit six consecutive Thursday evenings, June 11th thru July 16th. The group will be limited to ten men, so pre-registration is a must.

Day:	Thursdays 7:30-10:00 June 11-July 16
Place:	Bisexual Center
Fee:	$75 members $100 non-members

Every year one of our biggest and most exciting activities is participating in the Lesbian/Gay Freedom Day Parade. This year surely will be no different!

On Sunday, June 28, this is the place to be, whether to take a stand against the new rise of homophobia from the "Moral Majority"; to celebrate our sexuality and unity with sisters and brothers; or just to soak up the sun and enjoy San Francisco's largest community event.

Meet at the BiCenter at 9:00 AM to travel together to the beginning of the parade. Bring banners, balloons, placards, streamers, etc., to help create a joyous and conspicuous presence.

Also look for our booth at the Civic Center - stop by and say hello or, better yet, volunteer to staff the table for an hour. (You get to meet lots of people and it's fun.)

After the parade we will have the now-traditional wind-down party at the Center at 5:00 PM.

Photographs: members of the BiCenter contingent at last year's Gay Freedom Day Parade. Special thanks to Emily Kretz, the photographer, and to Kerth O'Brien, who prepared the photos for the Bi-Monthly.

JUNE 28

» PARADE! «

SEXUALITY AND SPIRITUALITY: INVITATION TO THE DANCE

by J. Benjamin Roe

In dancing I feel alive, my body-self celebrating the uniqueness that is me. In dancing and in experiencing music in other ways, the weakest part of my body feels most alive--there is no temptation to overburden it, but to flow and explore movement and rhythm. In dancing where there is inclusiveness of a range of orientations and lifestyles, as in worshipping in an inclusive and sensitive liturgy, I feel "together", most integrated as a body-self. In dancing I celebrate a sense of wholeness.

In dancing I experience relationship with others: the one(s) with whom I'm dancing as well as the others who are dancing. Sometimes we're dancing in similar ways, sometimes in very different ways, but we're still dancing to the same music.

In dancing with a special friend I share a sense of companionship, a shared sense of activity, celebration of pleasure, of sensual experience.

Finally, dancing is an act of compassion to the degree that it is expressing a concern for a shared partnership in doing acts of justice and reconciliation, as well as celebrating growth and the overcoming of pain.

Sexuality as "a sign, a symbol, and a means of our call to communication and communion" is, in a way very real to me, an invitation to the dance: the dance of life, of wholeness, of relationship, of companionship and of compassion.

I haven't always felt free to dance. It's hard to dance when you're growing up with braces and casts on your legs; it's hard to dance in a sickbed; and, most importantly, it's hard to dance when you learn (sometimes by instruction) that you can't trust your body.

I haven't always felt free to dance. Religion taught both that our bodies were good (that Christ was God-in-bodiness) and that we couldn't trust the impulses of the flesh (translate: body). The latter was the stronger message but the former was a slim ray of hope to my conflicted, confused, often hurting and helpless being.

I haven't always felt free to dance. A man was supposed to be in control, to know exactly what dance steps were done to what music, to be the one to ask another to dance. If I couldn't trust my body to be able to move coordinatedly and gracefully and quickly, then I couldn't risk initiating dancing, especially if dancing meant that one wanted to get married! (After all, touching inevitably leads to...)

I haven't always felt free to dance. A minister shouldn't dance in public...

I haven't always felt free to dance. A man can't be good and be Christian if he loves a woman and enjoys the intimate friendship of another woman. A man can't even be a man or be real if he also is attracted to and enjoys the intimate friendship of other men. For a long time I hid my awareness of my enjoyment of other males because that meant I was...bad. I'm making progress, but tradition is strong: one must be either/or, not both/and in dancing. One shouldn't dance with more than one other at a time.

In dancing I celebrate my journey of growth in wholeness, in self-knowledge, self-acceptance, and courage to be me in relationship, companionship, and compassion.

In dancing I celebrate a God who has been faithfully present through my journeys. I celebrate God, who has offered me acceptance and wholeness through my wonderings, my panic and terror, my depths of loving and heights of vulnerability and joy, all intimately a part of my experience and growth in my sexuality.

In dancing I celebrate the communal nature of existence, the eye-to-eye, shoulder-to-shoulder, hip-to-hip experience of sexuality, the commonness of our human journeys, the dreams of a new community.

In dancing I celebrate the passion and love of a God who celebrates the goodness, the growth, the compassion, the joy that is me, that is us.

Let us dance together!

---

c. 1980 J. Benjamin Roe
With thanks to James Nelson, for whose class in Sexual Theology this was written, and for his book Embodiment. Thanks also to Matthew Fox and A Spirituality Named Compassion.

WHAT'S RIGHT?
by Bob N.

I used to hide
My state of mind
I thought they'd think
I wasn't kind.

I'd check inside
And censor out
The parts of me
That might cause doubt.

It worked, you know,
They never guessed;
My friends and family
Were impressed.

It worked so well
I fooled myself;
And stored my feelings
On a shelf.

For quite some time
I played that game,
My life was smooth,
Though rather tame.

My highs and lows
Were short and flat,
I got real bored,
And even fat.

What's wrong with me?
Have I no lust?
The cage I'm in
I've got to bust!

My friends, alarmed,
Tried to be gentle,
Yet to a man
They were judgmental.

"Relax," they said,
"You're not remiss,
This angst is your
Midlife crisis."

But deep inside
I knew myself;
That little germ;
Retarded elf.

The "Me" inside
Was crying out:
"I want freedom!"
Was its shout.

I set my course
Without advice:
Was I a jerk,
Or was I nice?

My friends were dropped,
Divorced my wife,
It's my turn now
To find my life,

Gestalt, encounter,
Shrinks and EST;
Sex, massage
And all the rest.

I tried them all,
They all helped some
Yet growth alone,
Was maximum.

As years have passed
That "little me"
Has gotten bigger,
And more free.

It's rare I censor
Or restrict;
I like the way
That I have picked.

The "Me" that's now,
Though sometimes rude,
Is never stuck
In just one mood.

I've got three Lovers
In my life,
Not to mention
My ex-wife.

My new friends
Say that I'm OK;
Some even know
I'm partly Gay.

And that's not all
That's on the list,
In sex I am
A masochist.

The dragon is
My special charm,
Like me, perverse,
But no real harm.

And though alone
I want to live,
There's lots of love
That I can give.

Because I'm free
I can give more,
Both free to hate
And to adore.

I guess to some
It's not success,
To them it's all
A tragic mess.

They may be right,
They may be wrong,
About that point
I don't feel strong.

I do know now
I'm never bored;
So many things
I've not explored.

My highs and lows
Are sharp and clear,
I've known real joy,
And real fear.

And yet, who knows:
I can't dictate,
What's right or wrong
Is up to fate.

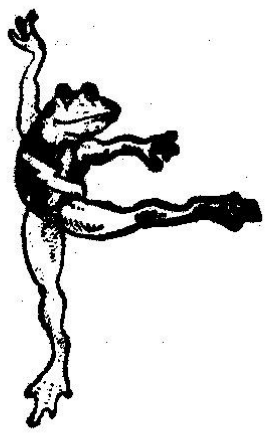
I'll play this way
Because it's fun,
Let God decide
Who's lost or won.

December 28, 1980

BI SOCIETY PAGE

BURBLE BURBLE...

Hottub Party! Sunbathe and relax with good friends and hot bubbling water. The BiCenter is sponsoring a twelve-hour benefit party at Heaven's Hottub in the East Bay. We're asking for a $6.00 donation. Proceeds will help finance our float at the Lesbian and Gay Freedom Day Parade. Come at 1 PM on Saturday, May 16. Potluck barbecue dinner at 6 PM, dancing, games, and non-sexual massage. Party ends at 1 AM, but feel free to stay overnight. There will be a $3.00 champagne brunch the next morning. Bring massage and tanning oils, towel, food for potluck and friends. Call John at 223-6438 for directions and car pooling.



It's not so bad being a Frog, as long as no one expects you to be a Prince.

PASSOVER SEDER

What a wonderful way to spend the second night of Passover - having a seder with friends at the Bisexual Center. Many people came who had never been to a seder before and the response was overwhelming. All the traditional foods were present and everyone left feeling very full. This will become an annual event and we hope that those who missed it this year will be sure to come next year.

MEMORIAL DAY PICNIC

Bring your fried chicken, potato salad, and all the fixings to our Memorial Day Picnic (no barbecue facilities). Also bring frisbees, volleyballs, and any other games to share for a day of sun, good friends, and lots of fun.

Date: Sunday, May 24
Time: 11:00 AM - 5:00 PM
Place: Sunken Meadows in Golden Gate Park, on Kennedy Drive behind the De Young Museum

FOURTH-OF-JULY CAMPING TRIP

One of the most exciting events of last year was the camping trip at the Schoolhouse Canyon Campground at the Russian River. The unity, joy and strength gained during the Gay Freedom Day march was multiplied during the three days we spent together. Lloyd Cook, who had come down from Victoria, British Columbia, described the event as ". . . an amazing collection of powerful individual personalities banded together around a campfire. An emerging people. . . ."

John and Vernie Fuller have reserved an even larger area for us this year. We will be there Friday through Sunday, July 3, 4 and 5. This is a members-only event. Space is limited so it's important to get reservations in early. The cost is $10 per night per person. Call the Center at 929-9299 or David Lourea at 567-3871 for carpooling directions.

For reservations, send $10 per person to the Center by June 30, specifying the days you want to be there, and we'll send you a map and directions.

WOMEN'S NIGHT POTLUCK

Our potlucks are such successes that we've decided it's time for another one. So get out your best recipes, get creative, and bring your good food to the Center. This event is for women only.

Date: Friday, June 26
Time: 7:30 PM
Place: The BiCenter
Donation: $3.00/members
$6.00/non-members

Groups & Workshops

PROGRAMS FOR WOMEN

Relationships/Sexuality Group

The BiCenter is offering a repeat of the weekly relationships/sexuality group for women. This will be an 8-week group focused on creating what we want in our relationships and sexual life-style. This is not a rap group, but will have a workshop format, with structured exercises, small-group discussions, guided fantasies, etc., to assist participants in exploring issues of concern in these areas.

The group will be held on Sunday evenings from 7:30-9:30 at the BiCenter, beginning May 10 (Mother's Day). The cost is $10 per week for members, $12.50 per week for non-members. The size of the group will be a maximum of 10 women. It will be a closed group - no new participants after the second session.

The group will be led by Marilyn King, Ph.D., a licensed psychologist and member of the BiCenter Board of Directors. Marilyn has had extensive experience facilitating groups, both at the BiCenter and for many other organizations. Call Marilyn at 431-5513 to reserve a space, or for more information.

WOMEN'S SEXUALITY WORKSHOP

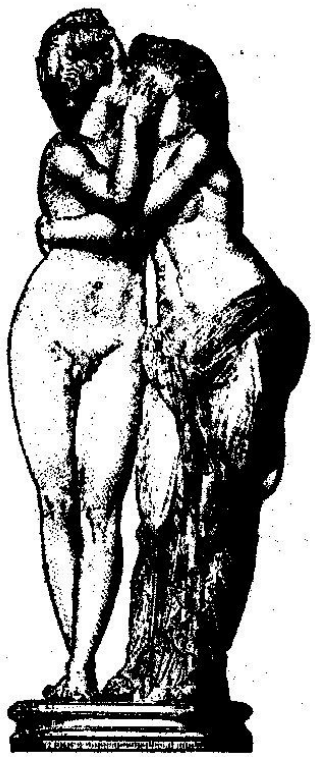
This one-day workshop for women will be devoted to exploring our feelings, attitudes, fantasies and experiences about sexuality - with ourselves, other women, and men. We will cover such topics as our sexual fantasies, our feelings and values about masturbation, ways we communicate and would like to communicate about sexuality, and our feelings and experiences with same and other - sex partners. The workshop will include some media, large- and small-group discussion, and guided imagery.

Date: Saturday, June 6, 1981
Time: 9:30 AM - 5:30 PM
Place: BiCenter, 1757 Hayes St.
Cost: $30/members, $40/non-members
Led by: Marilyn King

Preregistration is required. To preregister, call Marilyn at 431-5513 by June 1.

THERAPY GROUP FOR MEN AND WOMEN

Alan Rockway, Ph.D. has joined the BiCenter staff and is available for individual and couples therapy and counseling. Anyone interested in participating in an on-going therapy group at the BiCenter with Dr. Rockway, please contact the BiCenter or Dr. Rockway directly at 526-4887. The fee for a group of this type would be approximately $12.00 per session.



MEN & WOMEN'S RELATIONSHIP WORKSHOP

As bisexual people we are frequently intimately involved with people of both sexes. This workshop will focus on the different expectations we have of each of the sexes as well as how we react differently to men and to women. We will examine the difficulties we have in each of these type of relationships and look for more constructive ways of handling these relationships.

This will be a 6-hour workshop at the BiCenter on June 13, 1981 starting at 9:30 AM ending at 4:30 PM. The fee is $12 and you must pre-register at the BiCenter by June 6th with a $5 deposit. This workshop is lead by Paul Malkin. For more info call Paul at 465-6045.

Community Bulletin Board

NEWSLETTER

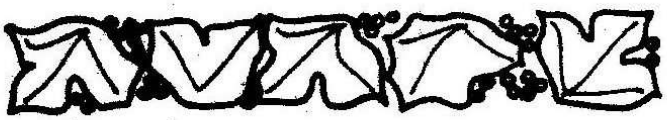
The Bi-Monthly needs your contributions: articles, graphics, letters. Except for brief announcements, your contributions must be submitted by the beginning of the Layout Session to be considered for the next issue. All contributions for the next issue must be in by the beginning of Pasteup. Both sessions are held at the Bi Center, from 11:00 A.M. to 4:00 P.M.

Layout: Sunday, June 21
Pasteup: Sunday, June 28

We need your help in preparing the newsletter: typing, cutting and pasting, and other tasks. Why not drop by the Center on Layout or Pasteup day, and help out for an hour or two? (No experience required!)

ASIAN POT LUCK

The BiCenter is blessed with a number of exceptionally talented gourmet cooks. Our next pot-luck will be Saturday night June 6th at 8:00 PM, and will have an Asian theme. Cook or bring your favorite Asian delight and be prepared for an unusual evening at the Center. This is a members-only event and we're asking for a $4.00 donation.



RAP GROUPS

The BiCenter offers open drop-in rap groups for women and men on Tuesday and Wednesday nights. The rap groups are a good way to explore ideas and share concerns about friendship, love, and sexuality, in a safe and supportive environment, with help from trained and experienced leaders. The groups start at 7:30 PM. Please be on time. We ask for a $3.00 donation.

BI-GAY-LESBIAN GET-ACQUAINTED SOCIAL

On June 20 from 9:00-12:00 PM at the BiCenter there will be a Bi-Lesbian-Gay get together. Let your Gay and Lesbian friends know and bring them along for a great time of food and drink, dancing and sharing our joy and unity.

We are asking for a $3.00 per person donation for this special event. Also, please bring your favorite beverage and munchies to share.

BOARD MEETINGS

Meetings of the Board of Directors are open to members who would like to share ideas and suggestions or just want to see how the BiCenter is run. The next two meetings will be held at the Center at 7:30 PM, on May 11 and June 8.

NEW MEMBERSHIP POLICIES

In an attempt to clarify and encourage memberships and provide confidentiality to our members, three new policies have been instituted:

One: Those persons not wishing to be in our records in any way can join and receive an "anonymous" membership and a card without a name but a code number which guarantees anonymity. Those people choosing this type of membership will not receive mailings (the newsletter) and must remember to bring their cards to all functions exclusively for BiCenter members.

Two: Members may choose to not receive mail by checking the block on the membership form when joining or renewing.

Three: Some BiCenter events will be for members only. This is to encourage everyone to join. You do not need to bring membership cards to these events unless you choose option one above and are an "anonymous" member. Memberships will be checked and available at the door.

BI-MONTHLY CALENDAR

may

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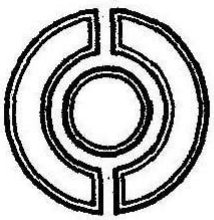

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